

# Technical Notes for 2001 Child Deaths in North Carolina

## I. Child Deaths by Cause

The Child Deaths by Cause table presents child death data by thirteen cause of death categories. The number of SIDS deaths increased from 95 in 2000 to 102 in 2001. Some or all of this increase could be due to enhanced quality control efforts by our staff this year.

### **Rounding considerations**

The numbers in the Average Annual Number column are rounded to the nearest whole number and may not sum to the total due to independent rounding. Percent change is based on unrounded numbers.

### Unintentional Injuries Subcategories

Note that the total number of unintentional injuries is divided into five subcategories: *motor vehicle injuries, bicycle injuries, injuries caused by fire, drowning, and other unintentional injuries*. These subcategory numbers are not included in the column total since they are already accounted for in the broad Unintentional Injuries category. This breakdown of unintentional injuries is used for all four columns: Average Annual Number 1997-2001, Number in 2000, Number in 2001, and Percent Change.

### Interpreting Percent Change

The Percent Change column is a comparison of the 2001 deaths to the 2000 deaths. Note that when the category has very few deaths, such as bicycle injuries, a change of just one or two deaths produces a relatively large percent change.

### Notes on Cause of Death Categories:

Since 1999 the mortality data have been coded under ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases-Tenth version). The coding for 1998 and prior were done under ICD-9 (International Classification of Diseases-Ninth version). In order to maintain consistent reporting, the standard cause of death vocabulary is kept same as in the past. However, the ICD-10 codes differ from those under ICD-9, because of changes in coding rules, changes in category names and ICD numbers, and - importantly - because of changes in the tabulation lists used to produce data. *Consequently, caution should be exercised in comparing cause of death across years.*

- Other birth-related conditions are certain conditions that originate in the perinatal period, during birth or the first month of life.
- *Motor vehicle injuries* includes both traffic and non-traffic collisions.
- *"Bicycle" injuries* includes pedal cyclist deaths involving collisions with or without a motor vehicle; collision with a motor vehicle deaths are not included in the motor vehicle collision category.
- *Injuries caused by fire* includes, but is not limited to, fires in private dwellings and injuries caused by ignition of clothing.
- *Other unintentional injuries* includes unintentional injuries not included in any of the four injury categories: motor vehicle, bicycle, injuries by fire, or drowning.

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## **II. Child Deaths by Age**

Note that the age categories span unequal age ranges. Consequently, caution should be used when making comparisons among the groups. Comparisons are best made within each age group.

The Infant category includes all children who have not yet reached their first birthday.

## **III. North Carolina Population Data**

When the 2000 census results were released, the State Demographer made necessary changes in the estimated population to reflect proximate population for the previous nine years. These changes revealed that the North Carolina population had been underestimated by 3 to 4 percent over the ten year period. The child death rates shown in the graph have been recalculated using the smoothed population estimates. With these changes, the rates have decreased slightly.

Smoothed estimates were based upon a process of smoothing the estimates released in December of 2000 to more nearly match the trendline between the values for April 1, 1990, and April 1, 2000, from the 1990 and 2000 censuses.

The 2001 population figures used in this report are certified population estimates for North Carolina and its counties as of July 1, 2001.